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THE EPISCOPACY
AND
CHURCH UNITY

THE EPISCOPACY AND CHURCH UNITY.

by

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To
Sallie Monica Pease

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PREFACE.

The casual reader, hurriedly glancing at the title of this paper will probably decide that it is just another attempt to foster the acceptance of the doctrine and teachings of the Protestant Episcopal Church by the Non-Conformist bodies, in an effort to bring about the reunion of the Church of God.

All too often in the past this has been the thought of writers dealing with the Orders of Ministry for the United Church of the future from the Episcopal viewpoint.

Keeping in mind ever the knowledge that most attempts to reunite the Church in the past have been doomed to failure before the conference called to discuss a plan of action had convened, because the conferring delegates have been unwilling to concede in the slightest degree to the claims of the other side, I have attempted to set forth a clear, fair view of the claims of Episcopacy as the proper Order of Ministry for the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. The thoughts and ideas herein set forth are the result of a study of the development of the threefold Ministry of the Primitive Church with an entirely different idea in mind. My thesis has been a growth in the complete sense of the word.

The paper falls logically into three main parts. In the first I have attempted to trace the development of the threefold Ministry, comprised of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons, in the first centuries of the Church's history.

In the second section I have traced the growth of the Episcopacy in the Old Catholic Age to the time of Gregory the Great, and in the concluding division, looking back to the heritage of the Ministry of the Primitive Church and of the Old Catholic Age, I have attempted to show that the basis for Church Unity is the threefold Ministry of the Episcopate.

Berkeley, California,
March 7, 1932.

R.B.P.

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I

Origin and Development of the Episcopacy.

"It is evident unto all men diligently reading Holy Scripture and ancient Authors that from the Apostles' time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church: Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. Which Offices were evermore had in such reverend estimation, that no man might presume to execute any of them, except he were first called, tried, examined, and known to have such qualities as are requisite for the same; and also by public Prayer, with Imposition of Hands, were approved and admitted thereunto by lawful Authority. And therefore, to the intent that these Orders may be continued, and reverently used and esteemed in this Church, no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful Bishop, Priest or Deacon, in this Church, or suffered to execute any of the said Functions, except he be called, tried, examined, and admitted thereunto, according to the Form hereafter following, or hath had Episcopal Consecration or Ordination."

So reads the Preface to the Ordinal of the "Book of Common Prayer" of the Episcopal Church.

With the exception of the discovery of the

"Didache" or the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles", little light has been thrown in recent years upon the subject of the origins of the Christian Ministry. However, modern interpretations of "Holy Scripture and ancient Authors" have been made, and in the following pages I am attempting to portray the modern theory in regard to the historic development of the threefold Ministry of the Episcopal Church during the first five centuries of the Church's history.

A point often overlooked in the controversy relative to the validity and the justification of the various Orders of the Ministry, The Episcopal, the Presbyterian, and the Congregational, is that although the claim of each body can be proved by a study of the history of Apostolic times, and although evidence proving the existence in primitive times of each of the Orders mentioned can be set forth, the claims of the other bodies cannot be disproved.

Any attempt to heal the wounds in the Church caused by the breaking away from time to time of controversial groups of the Church's members to form new Sects and Denominations, is doomed to failure as long as those seeking to heal these wounds fail to recognize the claims of all concerned. It is upon the rocks of ministerial Order that advocates of Church Unity most frequently find their hopes dashed to pieces. Conference after conference

meets, simply to end up against the blank wall of disagreement regarding the validity of ministerial Orders. No one is willing to concede in the slightest degree to the claims of the others, and there the conference ends with little or nothing new accomplished.

A great step forward is going to be taken by the advocates of Church Unity when they begin to face the facts clearly and fairly, and begin to compromise and to recognize the partial truths at least in the claims of the other side. The greatest obstacle in the path of Church Unity today, is, to use Canon Streeter's words, "that there is some one form of Clerical Order which alone is primitive". In other words, that there is some one form of Clerical Order which can be traced back to Apostolic authority to the total exclusion of all other claims. And the obstacle melts into nothingness as soon as it is realized that no such single Order existed. There was no one system of Church Order that existed as universal in the Primitive Church. The Apostles did not lay down any one Order of Ministry for the Infant Church. They appointed leaders to carry on the work which they established, and the Church Orders sprang up as the need for them became apparent. Examples of the three principal Orders and of many other systems can be found in the early Church, and the Episcopal Order did not spread

throughout the Church until the second century or later.

To quote Streeter:

"In the Primitive Church there was no single system of Church Order laid down by the Apostles. During the first hundred years of Christianity, the Church was an organism alive and growing-- changing its organization to meet changing needs. Clearly in Asia, Syria, and Rome during that century the system of government varied from church to church, and in the same church at different times. Uniformity was a later development; and for those times it was, perhaps, a necessary development."*

It is not my purpose to trace the development of the several Church Orders at this time. That has been done by others with varying degrees of success. But since the Episcopal Order did become the uniform system in the development of the sub-Apostolic Church it seems not amiss to touch briefly on the historical development and the characteristics of the Episcopal Ministry.

The Christian Church is in no way exempt from the dictates of that universal law which precludes the possibility of any society of men holding together without officers at its head to direct its course and to outline its policy. This was at once apparent to the members of the Primitive Church and even more apparent to the Disciples whom Jesus endowed with the gift of the Holy Spirit and

* "The Primitive Church" p. 267.

sent forth with the command "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations".

The Christian ideal: "a holy season extending the whole year round--a temple confined only by the limits of the habitable world--a priesthood coextensive with the human race", which Bishop Lightfoot* sets before us, was recognized as an ideal and not a reality and so was brought about the organization of the Christian Ministry. In order to communicate instruction more readily, conduct the worship and routine of the Church, and dispense charity to the needy, it became necessary to appoint special officers and leaders.

Metaphorically referring to them as the members of a body, St. Paul, on two occasions lists for us these early officers of the Church. In the earlier list, he enumerates "first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues".** And in the second list he mentions "apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers".* It would be folly to suppose that either of these lists were complete or that St. Paul intended them to be so. He merely mentions them as illustrating his thought of the members of the Body of Christ.

* I. Cor. 12:28

** Eph. 4:11

There is some ambiguity in the terms of the first list, and the meaning of such terms as "miracles", "helps", and "gifts of healing" is the subject for some dispute among Bible scholars. But his later use of the terms in the same chapter sheds some light upon the question. Workers of miracles, those possessing the gifts of healing, helpers, leaders, and those who speak with tongues, are no doubt what St. Paul is referring to here.

The development of the permanent Ministry of the Church was a gradual process extending over a period of about a century and a half. As the Apostles passed to their reward and as the Church became more settled in form, the higher and more important offices disappeared, and the functions of these offices either ceased to exist in the need of the Church or they were assumed by the officers who were retained.

St. Luke, in the "Acts of the Apostles", sets forth the Twelve Apostles as the only administrators of the Church in the earliest days. But this arrangement could not last long, and as the Church grew rapidly from the infant body of approximately one hundred and twenty members present at the first Pentecost, to a vast organism of great importance, the duties which fell upon the shoulders of the Apostles became too great. To meet the need for assistance

in the administration of the Church's affairs, various functions were passed to other hands, and gradually all of the burden was assumed by the threefold Ministry of the second century and later.

It is a well known fact that almost no subject in the realm of Church History has been more open to controversy than that of the organization of the Primitive Christian Church. Each of the Church Orders have attempted to justify their positions as de fide by appeal to the organization of the Church in the Primitive ages. And nothing is more difficult to prove, owing to the scantiness of the evidence that has been preserved. As has been noted before, there seem to have been in the Primitive Church several forms of organization, and to some extent the various contentions of the several contending Orders can be justified. The Episcopacy, which became the universal form by the end of the second century may be traced in some instances to the end of the Apostolic age, but it can not be claimed for the Episcopacy that it was universally diffused at that time. Walker,* reminds us that the earliest Christian Churches had no officers in the strict sense.

"Paul's letters to the Galatians, Corinthians,

* "History of the Christian Church."

and Romans make no mention of local officers. Those to the Corinthians could hardly have avoided some allusion, had such officers existed. Their nearest approach* is only an exhortation to be in subjection to such as Stephanas, and does not imply that he held office. The allusion in I Thess. 5:12 to those that "are over you in the Lord" is, at best, very obscure. Paul's earlier epistles show that all ministries in the church, of whatever sort, were looked upon as the direct gift of the Spirit, who inspires each severally for the service of the congregation."**

Since Christian communities sprang up often as the result of the untiring work of independent Christian workers moving about through the Empire, great variety of organization was to be expected. Someone has compared the spread of Christianity in primitive times to an epidemic. One individual, bitten by the germ of the True Faith, would carry the "disease" to all of his friends and acquaintances, and this process continued over and over again with each new convert soon led to the universal spread of the religion. Ayer, in his "Source Book for Ancient Church History", stresses the fact that the significance of the organization of the Primitive Church was first felt in connection with the danger from heresy. This would be quite natural in a Church with such a heterogeneous beginning.

As I have mentioned above, Paul specifies three classes of leaders of the Primitive Church, Apostles,

* I Cor. 16:15-16. ** I Cor. 12:4-11, 28-30, 14:26-33.

Prophets, and Teachers. All three were charismatic in nature, and Paul regards his own Apostolate as charismatic.* The Apostle's work was primarily that of founding Christian Churches, while that of the Prophet and Teacher was the proclamation and the interpretation of the divinely inspired message of the Gospel. Authorities have failed in an attempt to find the exact shade of difference between the Prophet and the Teacher, but it is agreed that all three classes were charismatic. One of the worst sins among the Primitive Christians was the refusal to hear the Spirit speaking through these ministers.

"Whosoever, therefore, shall come and teach you all these things that have been said receive him; but if the teacher himself be perverted and teach a different doctrine to the destruction thereof, hear him not; but if to the increase of righteousness and knowledge of the Lord, receive him as the Lord.

But concerning the Apostles and Prophets, so do ye according to the ordinance of the Gospel: Let every Apostle coming to you be received as the Lord; but he shall not abide more than a single day, or if there be need, a second likewise; but if he abide three days, he is a false Prophet. And when he departs, let not the Apostle receive anything save bread until he find shelter; but if he ask money, he is a false Prophet. And any Prophet speaking in the Spirit ye shall not try, neither discern; for every sin shall be forgiven, but this sin shall not be forgiven. Yet not every one that speaketh in the Spirit is a Prophet, but only if he have the ways of the Lord.***

* Gal. 1:1, 11-16; I Cor. 14:18.

** "Teachings of the Twelve Apostles", Chap. 11.

Paul exercised a superintendence over the Churches that he founded, either personally, or with the help of his companions and assistants such as Timothy.* This supervision was natural to Paul as founder of the Churches and it is hardly to be questioned that the other Apostles supervised the Churches which they instituted. But with Christianity spreading so rapidly it was also natural that this Apostolic supervision came to be less and less rigid. For, at best, an Apostle could make only a few visits to each of the Churches in his care, and only in cases of emergency such as arose at Corinth, were special visits made.

It was inevitable that with such supervision, abuses in the use of charismatic gifts should creep in. And we have in the passage in the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles" just quoted, evidence that this abuse was a real danger in the early Church. False Prophets were everywhere and heresies were common. Often it was difficult for the members of the newly organized Churches to distinguish the true from the false, and the tests outlined above are but two of many such means of uncovering false Prophets. And so we uncover one of the most plausible reasons for the development of a definite fixed leadership for the Churches.

* I Cor. 4:17, 16:10.

History points conclusively to the fact that by the middle of the second century the Church was organized with the three orders of ministers, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. Of these three orders, the Diaconate came first. The story is a familiar one, being told in the sixth chapter of The Acts. A complaint arose among the Greek Christians who claimed that their widows were being neglected in the daily ministrations, and that the Hebrew widows were getting all of the attention. The twelve Apostles called a meeting of the Christians and a new office was created in order to relieve the Twelve, who claimed that it was not right that they should forsake the word of God and serve tables, or "minister" tables as the marginal note in the American Revised Version quotes it. Seven men, of good report, and full of the Spirit and of wisdom were selected by the multitude from among their number and the Apostles laid their hands on them in token of ordination.

These seven were set aside for a definite service, the ministration to the poor and the needy. Some would question the validity of the claim that they were Deacons in the sense that the title is used later in the history of the Church, but although the title "Deacon" is not used in this reference by St. Luke, Irenaeus, the first writer who alludes to their appointment, distinctly holds them to

have been Deacons.* And the functions are essentially those which fell to the lot of the Deacons of the second century. I agree with Lightfoot that any arguments attempting to connect the office and functions of the Seven to those of the Levite and the Chazan of the Hebrew Synagogue are groundless.** The Diaconate was a new and distinct order in the Christian Church created to meet a definite need.

It is interesting to note that the names of the Seven are all Hellenistic. "Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmanas, and Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch".*** All Greek names. Which may be interpreted as a great concession showing the loving spirit of the Hebrew members of the Church.

Although the primary work of the Deacons was the relief of the poor, as distinguished from the higher functions of teaching and prophesying, the first Deacons soon assumed duties beyond those indicated by the creation of the office. To again quote Lightfoot,

"Moving about freely among the poorer brethren and charged with the relief of their material wants, they would find opportunities of influence

* Lightfoot, "The Christian Ministry", p. 18.

** Lightfoot, Op. cit., p.20. *** Acts 6:5.

which were denied to the higher officers of the Church, who necessarily kept themselves more aloof. The devout zeal of a Stephen or a Philip would turn these opportunities to the best account; and thus, without ceasing to be dispensers of alms, they became also ministers of the Word. The Apostles themselves had directed that the persons chosen should be not only "men of honest report", but also "full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom"; and this careful foresight, to which the extended influence of the Diaconate may be ascribed, proved also the security against its abuse.*

But it would appear that the work of teaching on the part of the Deacons was not common with the office but depended rather upon the personal qualifications of the individual officer.

The office of the Diaconate spread from the Church at Jerusalem to the Gentile Churches and, as has been noted, by the second century it was universal with Christendom. Some scholars hold that Paul's reference to "Helps" in the first Epistle to the Corinthians** written about 57 A.D., and the "ministration" in the Epistle to the Romans*** written the following year, means the office of the Diaconate. And judged solely from the functional angle of the office, this theory is entirely logical. The office became more and more important as it spread throughout the Church, and by the time Paul wrote his Epistle to

* Lightfoot, *Op. cit.*, p. 21.

** I Cor. 12:28

*** Rom. 12:7

the Church at Philippi,* about 62 A.D., the Deacon is found to rank after the presbyters in the twofold ministry of that Church. Which brings us to the second order of the ministry, the Priesthood.

Although the office of Deacon was an innovation in the Primitive Church, it does not follow that the other offices of the threefold ministry were likewise new creations. St. Luke dwells at length on the institution of the Diaconate, but is silent on the early history of the Presbyterate. And the explanation seems to lie in the fact that the Presbyterate could not claim the novelty that was a feature of the lower order.

It is to be remembered that the Christian Church looks back to a Jewish heritage. The Apostles were Jews, and it is natural that they would follow the customs of their forefathers when they were establishing the Christian Faith. Paul found himself in serious difficulty on several occasions because he was wont to preach the Gospel of Christ in the Synagogues in the cities he visited on his early journeys. The Synagogue was the center of Jewish worship at the time of Christ and later, and the institution was flexible enough to allow wide divergences of creed and

* Philip. 1:1.

practice. So it was that the early Christians turned to the pattern of the Synagogue when the necessity of organization presented itself. The Christians regarded themselves as a sect of Judaism, and as such were entitled to Synagogues of their own. And with the Synagogue, the normal government of that institution, comprised of a body of Elders or Presbyters, would be adopted to direct the worship and to direct the affairs of the body.*

So, the silence of the historian, Luke, is what would be expected with regard to the institution of this office. When he does mention Presbyters, he does it as though the institution of the order was the common knowledge of all of his readers. The Christian Presbyterate was organized on the pattern of the age-old Jewish order, while the Diaconate was the result of special need, and its institution was a novelty, calling for lengthy explanation and justification.

Lightfoot makes an interesting conjecture with regard to the institution of the Presbyterate in the Church at Jerusalem. He sees in the martyrdom of Stephen, the result of the assumption of the duties of teaching on the part of the Deacons, especially Phillip and Stephen, and

* Lightfoot, Op. cit., p. 25.

in the martyrdom of James, the cause behind the adoption of the next higher grade of the ministry, the Presbyterate. This he bases on the theory that following the death of James, the Twelve Apostles left Jerusalem on widely dispersed missions, making it necessary to provide a permanent organization for the Church there. "Now at all events," he says, "for the first time we read of 'Presbyters' in connection with the Christian brotherhood at Jerusalem."* Whether or not this represents the actual happenings in this particular instance, it throws interesting light upon the cause underlying the spread of the Presbyterate.

At any rate, it would appear that from the time of the persecution which led to the death of James, all official dealings with the Church at Jerusalem were carried on through the medium of the Presbyters. Paul brings the alms which he and Barnabas have collected from the Gentile Churches to the Presbyters at Jerusalem, and it is by the Presbyters that Paul is received on his last visit to Jerusalem to give an account of his missionary efforts. When, at the end of his third journey, Paul wishes to bid farewell to the Church at Ephesus, it is the Presbyters of the Church that he summons to Miletus.** Directions for the

* Op. cit., p. 25.

** Acts 20:17.

appointment of Presbyters are found in the Epistle to Titus,* and they are mentioned in the First Epistle of Paul to Timothy,** and the First Epistle of Peter.***

Evidence describing the work of the Presbyters of the Primitive Church is scarce, but enough information is available to show that their duties were at least two-fold. As was the case in the Jewish Synagogues, they were both the rulers and the instructors of the congregation. Government was probably the first duty of the Presbyterate, but as the visits of the Apostles became less frequent the second function grew in importance and finally was on a par with the first. It is probable that the statement in the Didache**** that the Presbyters performed the duties of Prophets and Teachers is true of the early as well as the later period, and it is possible that the double function is referred to in Paul's expression "pastors and teachers", the two words describing different aspects of the same office.

The Pastoral Epistles insist upon the faculty of teaching as one of the qualifications for the position in two passages where directions relating to Presbyters are given. "Let the Presbyters that rule well be counted

* Titus 1:5 ** I Tim. 4:14, 5:1, 17, 19.

*** I Peter 5:1. **** "Teachings of the Twelve Apostles,"
Chap. 15.

worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and in teaching".* "Holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers".** Yet in both of the passages, the work of teaching appears to be regarded as incidental to the office. The governmental function was primary, other functions developing as the need arose.

So much for the two lower Orders of the Ministry. Evidence that the third and highest Order, the Episcopate, was as firmly established by the end of the Apostolic Age is very meager. Let us now turn to its development.

The theory, based upon an assumption of Theodoret, that the same officers in the Church who were first called Apostles, came afterward to be designated as Bishops, is groundless, Lightfoot thinks.

"If the two offices had been identical", he says, "the substitution of the one name for the other would have required some explanation. But in fact the functions of the Apostle and the Bishop differed widely. The Apostle like the Evangelist, held no local office. He was essentially, as his name denotes, a missionary, moving about from place to place, founding and confirming new brotherhoods. The only ground on which Theodoret builds his theory is a false interpretation of a passage in St. Paul. At the opening of the Epistle to Philippi the Presbyters (here called Bishops)

* I Tim. 5:17

** Titus 1:9

and Deacons are saluted, while in the body of the letter one Epaphroditus is mentioned as an 'Apostle' of the Philippians. If 'Apostle' here had the meaning that is thus assigned to it, all the three orders of the ministry would be found at Philippi. But this interpretation will not stand. The true Apostle, like St. Peter or St. John, bears this title as the messenger, the delegate, of Christ Himself: while Epaphroditus is only so styled as the messenger of the Philippian brotherhood; and in the very next clause the expression is explained by the statement that he carried their alms to St. Paul. The use of the word here has a parallel in another passage, where messengers (or Apostles) of the Churches are mentioned. It is not, therefore, to the Apostle that we must look for the prototype of the Bishop."*

The growth of the Episcopacy took place in just those forty or fifty years of Christian history about which we have the least information, and it is quite natural that it constitutes one of the most debated problems in theological discussion.

In the farewell message of St. Paul mentioned above, He exhorted the "Presbyters" of the Church at Miletus to "take heed unto yourselves and to all the flock in which the Holy Ghost hath made you 'Bishops'",** which brings us to the question of the synonymous use of the terms "Presbyter", and "Bishop". It would be outside my purpose to dwell at length on the subject. Suffice it to say here that it is generally accepted by scholars today that in the Apostolic

* Op. cit., p. 30.

** Acts 20:17-29.

Church the Presbyters were often referred to as "Bishops" or "Overseers" and sometimes as "Pastors". Bishop Lightfoot* offers perhaps the most important discussion on this subject, but it is important to read his dissertation on "The Christian Ministry" to get his complete argument. He holds that although the two terms were used synonymously in the early Church, the term "Bishop" came afterward to designate a higher officer under whom the Presbyters served, and the Episcopate properly so called would seem to have developed from the subordinate office. Or, to state the case clearly, the Episcopate developed not from the Apostolate but from the Presbyterate by elevation, once again, as the need arose.

Evidence at hand would seem to show that colleges of Bishop-Presbyters governed the Churches during the latter part of the first century. Hermas, writing between 115 and 140, would seem to imply that as late as his time there was this collegiate office at Rome.** Harnack's theory that the Presbyters were the older brethren of the congregation, from whom the collegiate Bishops were chosen, supports Lightfoot's contention that the Episcopate was a development from the lower order. A Bishop would be a Presbyter, but a Presbyter was not necessarily a Bishop.*** It is

* Philippians p. 95-99.

** Visions II:4.

*** Walker p. 46.

evident, however, that until some time after the year 100 A.D. Rome, Greece, and Macedonia had at the head of each congregation a group of collegiate Bishops or Presbyter-Bishops, with a number of Deacons as their helpers. These were chosen by the Church,* or at least "with the consent of the whole Church".**

The second century brought with it a body of literature which indicates that there existed at the time a threefold ministry consisting of a single monarchical Bishop, Presbyters, and Deacons in each congregation of the region to which it applies. Although the treatment is quite obscure, it would appear that this is the intimation in I Timothy and Titus. Of course it is to be remembered that these are both disputed Epistles, and Walker notes that "whatever Pauline elements these much disputed letters contain, their sections on Church government betray a development very considerably beyond that of the other Pauline literature, and it can scarcely be conceived as belonging to Paul's time."*** But what is obscure in these Pastoral Epistles is quite clear in the writings of Ignatius, (110-117), who was himself the Bishop of Antioch.**** He exalts the local monarchical Bishop in the Churches at Smyrna,

* Teachings 15. ** I Clement 44. *** Op. cit., p. 47.
**** Romans 2.

Philadelphia, Ephesus, Magnesia and Tralles, and in writing to four of these Churches he mentions the Bishop by name. To Ignatius the monarchical Bishop was a great rallying point of Church unity, and also a staunch opponent of heresy. "Shun divisions as the beginning of evils. Do ye all follow your Bishop, as Jesus Christ followed the Father, and the Presbytery as the Apostles, and to the Deacons pay respect."* He does not treat the monarchical Episcopate as an innovation, but accepts it as established, although it did not always command the respect that he desired for it.** Thus it would appear that the monarchical Episcopate arose between the time that Paul summoned the Presbyter-Bishops to Miletus,*** and the time at which Ignatius of Antioch wrote. The change, says Headlam, was a gradual one.

"Episcopacy, like all other Church customs, had its roots in Apostolic times; but Episcopacy, as it existed in later days, was not the direct result of Apostolic action, but was the creation of the Church, which gradually moulded its institutions to fit the altered needs of the times. --- Those needs were caused by the destruction of everything which had given coherency and unity to the Church. Time and change had swept away all those links which bound the local societies together. They might, under such circumstances, have developed in many different directions; but the strong sense of unity implanted in them from the beginning, the inevitable result of their origin, prevented any such thing; and the Church, out of elements left it by the Apostles, forged

* Smyrnans 8. ** Philadelphians 7. *** Acts 20:17-25.

for itself a strong, elastic form of government which never checked free development, but enabled it to present to the world a splendid coherent solidarity."*

The Rev. George T. Purves, D.D., recently a professor in the Princeton Theological Seminary, has written a book on the "Apostolic Age". On pages 297-98, in his discussion of the latter part of the first century, he says:

"The Christian Community in each locality had been governed originally by a body of Presbyter-Bishops after the model of a Synagogue. But at the end of the century, a single ruler appears in the Churches of Asia called by pre-eminence, 'the Bishop'. Assisted by his corps of Presbyters, he was in charge of the administrative and executive work of the Church. (Comp. the Ep. of Ignatius, and perhaps, Rev. II, 1-8, etc.) Since in the earlier period 'Bishop' and 'Presbyter' indicated the same office, the latter form of government must have developed out of the former by the elevation of one to the position of permanent president. The centralizing process advanced, however, unequally in different places. It was more advanced in the east than in the west. At the close of the century it can be affirmed positively only of the churches of Asia. Yet the drift toward it must have been general. It was, in fact, a natural movement in the interest of efficiency of organization and unity of life."**

Episcopal Ordination will be treated more or less at length later. Suffice it to say here that the earliest evidence is found in the well known passage of Clement of Rome.

* "The Church and Christian Reunion", p. 99.

** Quoted in Walsh, Church Facts and Principles, p. 122.

"The Apostles received the Gospel for us from the Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ was sent forth from God. Christ then was from God and the Apostles from Christ. Both therefore were from the will of God in perfect order. Having then received commands and being fully assured through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and being confirmed in the word of God with full assurance of the Holy Ghost, they went forth, preaching the good tidings that the Kingdom of God was at hand. Preaching therefore from country to country and from city to city, they appointed their first fruits, having tested them by the Spirit, to be Bishops and Deacons to them that should believe. And this was no new thing, for indeed of old Scripture had spoken of Bishops and Deacons. For Scripture speaketh somewhat in this way: 'I will appoint their Bishops in righteousness and their Deacons in faith'."*

And a little later:

"And our Apostles knew through our Lord Jesus Christ that there will be strife over the name of Episcopacy. For this cause therefore, having received complete foreknowledge, they appointed the aforesaid, and afterwards they laid down a rule that if they should fall asleep other approved men should succeed to their ministration. Those then who were appointed by them (that is, the Apostles) or afterward by other men of repute, with the consent of the whole Church, and have ministered blamelessly to the flock of Christ peacefully and with dignity, in all modesty, and for a long time have borne a good repute from all, these we consider to be unjustly thrust out from their ministration."**

It is clear then, "That the ministers of the Church were appointed or ordained according to a rule which was believed to be of Apostolic origin".***

* I Cor. 42.

** Op. cit., 44.

*** Headlam, Op. cit., p. 102.

Headlam's conclusion, with which I agree, is that:

"Clearly in Apostolic times ordination was by laying on of hands with prayer through the duly appointed ministry of the Church. No doubt such a custom always continued. The exact form it took depended upon the rule of the Church, and this gradually became fixed and definite. But we have no means of tracing the development, nor adequate reason for thinking that the later custom was based upon definite Apostolic rule. Rather, here as elsewhere, the Church adapted Apostolic customs to the needs of the age. The source was Apostolic tradition, the rules were the rules of the Church."*

May we now sum up our position thus far. I have attempted to suggest the way in which the threefold ministry as we know it in the Christian Church, came into being. The evidence would suggest that it was the creation of the Church, as the result of definite need, developing principles of ministry and life which it received from the Apostles. The origin is found in the Apostolic Church, and it represents a continuous development from Apostolic times. But we cannot claim Apostolic authority in its behalf. It is necessary to recognize that we cannot claim Apostolic authority for any Christian institution or teaching unless the claim is backed by clear and certain documentary evidence coming from the time of the Apostles, and it is dif-

* Ibid. p. 103.

ficult to believe that Jesus could have intended that any institution should be looked upon as essential to the existence of the Church without giving explicit and certain directions. He did not directly institute or command the threefold ministry or any one of its orders, and we cannot therefore claim that it is essential to the Church. And it is equally as clear that we cannot quote any Apostolic ordinance in support of the threefold ministry. Evidence that it was instituted by the Apostles is very meager, and we must recognize the limitations of the authority that can be claimed for it. But we can claim that the threefold ministry comes to us with the authority and sanction of the Church in the earliest centuries of the Church's history. It is the direct development of Apostolic institutions and of the principles laid down by our Lord. "The Church, as a living organism, built up for itself a strong and effective instrument by which it might fulfill its mission, and maintain and pass on to future generations the divine word and life with which it had been intrusted."*

* Ibid. p. 106.

II

The Episcopacy and the Old Catholic Age.

With the spread of the Episcopacy, came the development of that form of the Christian Church known as the Catholic Church. A brief treatment of its origin and development would seem to follow logically at this point in our discussion. Coming into being in the second century, by the end of that century it was firmly established, and it preserved the unity of the Church until the schism between the East and the West. It also forms the basis of the organization of a great part of the Christian Church today. There has been great change and growth, and a study of its history reveals many changes of policy, but the fundamental principles remain unaltered.

Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, first used the term "Catholic" in referring to the Church. He used it in the sense of the Universal Church, which is the meaning that the word has in the Creed. The well known passage from the letters of Ignatius reads: "Wherever the Bishop shall appear, there let the multitude also be; even as, wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church."*

* Smyrnans 8.

To this idea of the universality of the Church came to be added the ideas of orthodoxy and unity, due, no doubt, to the conflict of the Church with the Heresies. These ideas of orthodoxy and unity are brought out in a passage from Cyril of Jerusalem:

"It is called Catholic because it stands over the whole world, from one end of the earth to the other; and because it teaches universally and completely one and all the doctrines which ought to come to men's knowledge, concerning things visible and invisible, things on earth and things in heaven; and because it brings into subjection to godliness the whole race of mankind, governors and governed, learned and unlearned; and because it is the universal physician and healer of every kind of sin, whether committed by the soul or the body, and possesses in itself every form of virtue which is named in deed and in word and in every kind of spiritual gift."*

The strongly consolidated Church that survived the Gnostic and Montanist crises has come to be designated today by the title "Old Catholic". Under this Old Catholic Church, "The power of the Bishops was greatly strengthened, a collection of authoritative New Testament Scripture recognized, and a creed formulated. Comparatively loosely organized Christianity now became a rigid corporate body, having recognized official leaders and capable not merely of defining its faith, but of shutting out from its communion all who did not accept its creeds or its officers".**

* Catech. xviii 23.

** Walker, Op. cit., p. 59.

Heussi, a recent German writer, epitomizes the change in these words: "About 50, he was of the Church who had received Baptism and the Holy Spirit and called Jesus, Lord; about 180, he who acknowledged the rule of faith (creed), the New Testament canon, and the authority of the Bishops."*

The Church was the home of the Spirit. "Where is the Church there is the Spirit of God," said Irenaeus, "and where the Spirit of God, there is the Church."** And as the home of the Spirit, the Church was the source of all spiritual gifts. She was the mother who fed her children with Spiritual food:

"O wonderful mystery," says Clement of Alexandria, "one is the Father of all, one is the Word of all, one the Holy Spirit, the same everywhere; one too she who is alone the Virgin Mother, for this I love to call the Church, a mother with no milk of her own, never a wife, alike virgin and mother, a virgin unspotted, a mother beloved, calling to her her own sons, and feeding them with the holy and nourishing milk of the Word."***

The Church was also the home of salvation.

"There can be no salvation for anyone except in the Church," said Cyprian. "He is not a Christian who is not in the Church of Christ. No one can have God as his Father, that has not first the Church as his mother."**** Cyril believed

* Kompendium der Kirchengeschichte, p. 44, quoted by Walker I. 60.

** Heresies III. xxxvii 1. *** Pedagogues vi. 42.

**** Epistles iv. 4

that it was only for those in the Church that there was salvation, and that all outside the Church would undoubtedly perish. It was on this belief that the discipline of the Church was built up. The spiritual power of the Church cannot be realized unless we understand that the fundamental conception in the minds of the early Christians was that the Church was the exclusive home of salvation.*

The conception of the Church as a great world-embracing society, the source of all spiritual blessings, and the source of salvation, is admirably stated by Cyril:

"God hath set in the Church every sort of virtue, I mean wisdom and understanding, temperance and justice, mercy and loving kindness, and patience unconquerable in persecutions. She, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, in former days amid persecutions and tribulations, crowned the holy martyrs with the varied and blooming chaplets of patience, and now in times of peace by God's grace receives her due honor from kings and those who are in high places, and from every sort and kindred of men. And while the kings of particular nations have bounds set to their authority, the Holy Church Catholic alone extends her power without limit over the whole world: for God, as it is written, hath made her border peace."**

Conflict with the Heresies, in addition to crystallizing ideas of universality, orthodoxy and unity, saw the development of creed, at least in the West. Creeds

* Headlam, Op. cit., p. 110

** Catechumens xviii 27.

were of two kinds, Baptismal and Conciliar. The Apostles' Creed is Baptismal, and the Nicene Creed as drawn up at the Council of Nicea was the first Conciliar Creed. In its later Constantinopolitan form as we have it today, it became the Baptismal Creed of the East and is thus both Conciliar and Baptismal.*

The germ of the Creed is found in the confession of the Ethiopian eunuch in the Acts, who, when interrogated before his Baptism, replied: "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." **

One of the oldest creeds that we possess is the old Roman Creed which read:

"I believe in God (the) Father Almighty,
And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord,
Who was born by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary,
Crucified under Pontius Pilate and buried,
The third day He rose from the dead,
He ascended into heaven,
Sitteth at the right hand of the Father,
Thence He shall come to judge living and the dead;
And in the Holy Ghost,
(The) holy church,
(The) remission of sins,
(The) resurrection of the flesh.

"It is translated from the Greek of Marcellus, Bishop of Ancyra, who had been turned out of his see by Arianizers, and found a refuge in Rome 337 to 352. Scholars think that his Greek was not a translation from the Latin, but the original language of the creed, going back to the time when the Church

* C.P.S. Clarke, "Short History of the Christian Church," p. 25

** Acts 8:37.

in Rome was Greek-speaking. But the Creed goes back much earlier than this. Rufinus (c.400) claimed that the old Roman Creed went back to the Apostles. Dr. Turner thinks it goes back at least to 150; Dr. Burn to 100. Internal evidence points to a very early date.

The Apostles' Creed, which is based on the old Roman Creed, is first found in its present form in a work by Pirminius, a Bishop from the neighborhood of Lake Constance who died in 753.*

The development of a canon of the New Testament was also the work of this period. The Primitive Church from the beginning reckoned the Old Testament as Scripture. The Gospels and the Pauline Epistles were no doubt highly valued by the Church, but they did not at first have Scriptural authority.** Polycarp, writing about 110 to 117 first designates a passage from Paul as Scripture,*** and Barnabas, about 131, was the first to give a passage from the Gospels Scriptural authority.****

"The process by which the New Testament writings came to Scriptural authority seems to have been one of analogy. The Old Testament was everywhere regarded as divinely authoritative. Christians could think no less of their own fundamental books. The question was an open one, however, as to which were the canonical writings. Works like Hermas and Barnabas were read in churches. An authoritative list was desirable. Marcion had prepared such a canon for his followers. A similar enumeration was gradually formed, probably in Rome, by the Catholic party. Apparently the Gospels were the first to gain complete recogni-

* Clarke, Op. cit., p. 27.
*** Philippians 12.

** Walker, Op. cit., p. 61
**** Barnabas 4.

tion, then the letters of Paul."*

By about 200, according to the witness of the Muratorian fragment, Western Christendom had a New Testament canon embracing Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, 1 and 2 Timothy, 1 and 2 John, Jude, Revelation, and the so-called Apocalypse of Peter.**

The whole process of the development of the New Testament canon in its present form was not complete in the West until about 400 and in the East until a much later date. The criterion for the selection of the books seems to have been that they were written by an Apostle or the immediate disciple of an Apostle, and thus represented Apostolic teaching. ***

The third safeguard resorted to by the early Church in its struggle against the Heresies was Apostolic succession, which meant at this period succession from Bishop to Bishop in a see back to the Apostle who was the original founder of the see, and was valued, not because it denoted valid consecration, but because it was a guarantee of orthodoxy.

The earliest appearance of the appeal to Apostolic

* Walker, Op. cit., p. 62.

** Ayer, Op. cit., pp. 117-120.

*** Walker, Op. cit. p. 62

tradition as preserved in the Apostolic sees is the following passage from Irenaeus, written about 175.

"The tradition, therefore, of the Apostles, manifested throughout the world, is a thing which all who wish to see the facts can clearly perceive in every church; and we are able to count up those who were appointed Bishops by the Apostles, and to show their successors to our own time, who neither taught nor knew anything resembling these men's ravings. For if the Apostles had known hidden mysteries which they used to teach the perfect, apart from and without the knowledge of the rest, they would have delivered them especially to those to whom they were also committing the churches themselves. For they desired them to be very perfect and blameless in all things, and were also leaving them as their successors, delivering over to them their own proper place of teaching; for if these should act rightly great advantage would result, but if they fell away the most disastrous calamity would occur.

"But since it would be very long in such a volume as this to count up the successions in all the churches, we confound all those who in any way, whether through self-pleasing or vainglory, or through blindness and evil opinion, gather together otherwise than they ought, by pointing out the tradition derived from the Apostles of the greatest, most ancient, and universally known Church, founded and established by the two most glorious Apostles, Peter and Paul, and also the faith declared to men which through the succession of Bishops comes down to our times. For with this Church, on account of its more powerful leadership, every church, that is, the faithful, who are from everywhere, must needs agree; since it is that tradition which is from the Apostles has always been preserved by those who are from everywhere.

"The blessed Apostles having founded and established the Church, intrusted the office of the Episcopate to Linus. Paul speaks of this Linus

in his Epistles to Timothy. Anacletus succeeded him, and after Anacletus, in the third place from the Apostles, Clement received the Episcopate. He had seen and conversed with the blessed Apostles, and their preaching was still sounding in his ears and their tradition was still before his eyes. Nor was he alone in this, for many who had been taught by the Apostles yet survived. In the times of Clement, a serious dissension having arisen among the brethren in Corinth, the Church of Rome sent a suitable letter to the Corinthians, reconciling them in peace, renewing their faith, and proclaiming the doctrine lately received from the Apostles.

"Evaristus succeeded Clement, and Alexander Evaristus. Then Sixtus, the sixth from the Apostles, was appointed. After him Telesephorus, who suffered martyrdom gloriously, and then Hyginus; after him Pius, and after Pius Anicetus; Soter succeeded Anicetus, and now, in the twelfth place from the Apostles, Eleutherus holds the office of Bishop. In the same order and succession the tradition and the preaching of the truth which is from the Apostles have continued unto us."*

Irenaeus then continues with an account of Polycarp's Episcopate in Asia Minor.**

The Gnostics claimed to have esoteric teaching, transmitted from the Apostles. They mutilated the Scriptures and forged so-called Apostolic writings, as, for example, the Gospel of Peter. Against this the Church alleged the succession of Bishops in the greater sees as proving the identity of the doctrine of the living Bishop with that of the Apostle who founded the see. Hegesippus, "a Jewish

* Heresies III, 1-3.

** Heresies, Op. cit., 4.

Christian of an inquiring mind", visited Rome (155-167), and wherever he went inquired about the doctrine, and says that "in every succession and in every city the doctrine prevails according to what is declared by the law and the prophets and the Lord".*

Tertulian worked out in legal fashion the argument of Irenaeus from the testimony of the Bishops in Apostolic churches. From Tertulian's use of the argument it became a permanent element in the thought of the West.

"The Apostles founded in the several cities churches from which the other churches have henceforth borrowed the shoot of faith and seeds of teaching and do daily borrow that they may become churches; and it is from this fact that they also will be counted as Apostolic, being the offspring of Apostolic churches. Every kind of thing must be judged by reference to its origin. Therefore so many and so great churches are all one, being from that first Church which is from the Apostles. Thus they are all primitive and all Apostolic, since they altogether are approved by their unity, and they have the communion of peace, the title of brotherhood, and the interchange of hospitality, and they are governed by no other rule than the single tradition of the same mystery.

"Here, then, we enter our demurrer, that if the Lord Jesus Christ sent Apostles to preach, others than those whom Christ appointed ought not to be received as preachers. For no man knoweth the Father save the Son and he to whom the Son hath revealed Him; nor does it appear that the Son has revealed Him unto any others than the Apostles, whom He sent forth to preach what, of course, He had revealed to them. Now, what they

* Clarke, Op. cit., p. 31.

should preach, that is, what Christ revealed to them, can, as I must likewise here enter as a demurrer, properly be proved in no other way than by those very churches which the Apostles themselves founded by preaching to them, both viva voce, as the phrase is, and subsequently by epistles. If this is so, it is evident that all doctrine which agrees with those Apostolic churches, the wombs and origins of the faith, must be reckoned for truth, as undoubtedly containing what the churches received from the Apostles, the Apostles from Christ, Christ from God. There remains, therefore, for us to show whether our doctrine, the rule of which we have given above, agrees with the tradition of the Apostles, and likewise whether the others come from deceit. We hold fast to the Apostolic churches, because, in none is there a different doctrine; this is the witness of the truth."*

So much for the doctrine of Apostolic Succession as developed by the Catholic Church. But when we come to examine the meaning of the expression we find that it is used in three different significations, and it is necessary to distinguish these carefully. The earliest meaning of the terms is that referred to above, a continuous succession of Bishops, publicly appointed to their office. These had handed on the true tradition of Christianity, its Scriptures, its faith, its rules of life, and its Church order. Bishop had succeeded Bishop. Each had followed the doctrine of his predecessor. Churches which could not claim an Apostolic founder had received the Gospel from

* Prescription 20, 21.

Apostolic Churches, and so they, too, preserved the Apostolic Succession.

"The argument was one which historically had a good foundation," says Headlam, but he reminds us that we must be quite clear what it implies and what it does not. "It implies no more than a succession of rulers each lawfully appointed to his office, or a succession of teachers in a school. It does not imply any succession by ordination. The Bishop was properly ordained, no doubt, but there is no idea that the validity of his ordination depended upon this succession, or that the succession depended upon any spiritual gifts received at ordination. If the manner of appointment to office had been without any religious ceremony the succession for this purpose would have been equally valid. The important point was correct and public appointment to the office."*

A later meaning of the expression came with the Bishops being spoken of more in their personal capacity as the successors of the Apostles. This meant that they performed the functions of the Apostles. They were the rulers of the Church, administering its discipline, acting as its principal teachers, preserving and guaranteeing the truth of its doctrine, performing its Sacraments, and laying hands on the faithful in confirmation, in penance and in ordination.** This conception has been held in the Church from the third century onward.

Turn now to the third interpretation of the ex-

* Op. cit., p. 126.

** Headlam, Op. cit., p. 126.

pression. And here we look to Bishop Gore for a definition. "It was intended that there should be in each generation an authoritative stewardship of the grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ, and a recognized power to transmit it, derived from above by Apostolic descent."* Which implies a succession not only of office, but a succession of ordination. It holds that the spiritual gifts with which the Church has always considered that its ministers are endowed came from God through the Apostles by a direct succession. The gift was transferred by the Apostles to the first Bishops by laying on of hands, and they in turn transmitted the gift to those who came after them. It is maintained that for a valid ministry and the due performance of the Sacraments this succession and transmission by ordination is necessary. But it is very doubtful that this was the doctrine of the early Church. A study of the Church Fathers, and especially of those passages referring to Apostolic Succession, does not reveal any passage that speaks of succession by ordination in this sense. And the argument from silence becomes a strong one when it is remembered that we are not dealing with periods about which we have but little information. This is one instance where

* "The Church and The Ministry", p. 59.

the knowledge of the period is fairly complete.

The probable explanation of this mistaken interpretation of the meaning of Apostolic Succession is this: at some period in the Church's history--evidence of the exact time is lacking--the idea that a valid ministry depended upon the succession grew up. And for proof of their idea, the supporters turned to the natural source of information, the Church Fathers. Here they found many references to Apostolic Succession which they promptly proceeded to interpret according to the ideas in their own minds. And as a consequence, passages are constantly quoted in favor of this interpretation of Apostolic Succession which in reality do not support it at all.*

What we can be fairly certain of is that early in the Church's history the idea was prominent that there had been a regular succession of Bishops in the principal sees since the days of their Apostolic founders. And at a later period it was held that these same Bishops might be looked on as the successors of the Apostles in the sense that they performed the same functions that the Apostles had exercised in their own times. But on the other hand, any idea that spiritual gifts were transmitted from the

* Headlam, Op. cit., p. 128.

Apostles, or that the Apostles in ordination transmitted grace to the first Bishops to be in turn transmitted by them to their successors, can not be supported by the evidence at hand.

Let us then consider what constituted a valid, or correct, or regular ordination according to the theory of the early Church. The ordinal found in the "Apostolic Constitutions," while not the earliest, is the fullest, and therefore the best suited for our needs.* The ordination of a Bishop is described.

The first point that is insisted upon is that he must be elected by the people. He is ordained by Bishops in the presence of Presbyters and Laity, who must bear witness that he is the man that they have chosen, and also that he is of a holy and blameless life. Then follows the prayer of consecration, addressed to the Almighty:

"Do thou now on the intercession of thy Christ through us pour forth the power of thy ruling Spirit, which ministers to thy beloved Son Jesus Christ, which he gave according to thy will to the holy Apostles of thee the eternal God. Grant in thy name, O God that searcheth the hearts of men, to this thy servant whom thou hast chosen to be a Bishop, to feed thy holy flock, to perform the office of an high priest, blamelessly ministering night and day and propitiating thy presence, to gather together the number of the saved and offer the gifts of thy holy Church.

* Apostolic Constitutions VIII.

Grant to him, Almighty Lord, through thy Christ, to share in thy holy Spirit, so that he may have power to forgive sins according to thy command, to ordain clergy according to thine ordinance, to loose every yoke according to the power which thou gavest to thy Apostles, to be pleasing to thee in meekness and a pure heart, without wavering, free from all reproach, blamelessly, offering to thee the pure and unbloody sacrifice which thou ordainest through Christ, the mystery of the New Covenant, for a sweet savour through thy holy child Jesus."*

We notice in this prayer that God is asked to give to the Bishop the same Spirit that He gave to the Apostles, and through the Spirit will come the power to perform the same spiritual functions as the Apostles, especially ordaining ministers.

The essentials of a valid ordination were that it should be performed as the Church had ordained in order that no undeserving person should be elevated to the Ministry of the Church. The ordinances of the Church were believed to have been laid down by the Apostles, and it is obedience to the Apostolic ordinances and not transmission of grace that is emphasized. There is no hint of transmission. The spiritual gifts come as the direct gift of God in answer to the prayers of the Church.

Headlam gives an interesting summary of the essentials of ordination as he interprets them:

* Ibid.

"In the first place, it was generally believed that it should be performed in the Church. The Church was the home of the Spirit. In the Church the gifts of the Spirit were given. Through the Church came the power to give those gifts. Then secondly, the rite must be performed in the way that the Church had ordained. The rules of the Church were based on the commands of the Lord, so far as they were known, the customs of the Apostles--it was generally believed that the customs of each church were of Apostolic origin--and the regulations made by the Church. Thirdly, the rite must be performed by the duly appointed minister who had received authority for the purpose. That means in general the Bishop. It was the Bishop however, not because there was anything magical in his office or because he had received spiritual power by transmission from the Apostles, but because the Church had so ordered it, and he had been consecrated for that purpose. There are a considerable number of instances quoted of ordination by other than Bishops. None of them are conclusive, but there are, I think, signs that the rule had not always been rigidly or universally observed. At one period in the Church, for example, a Confessor might become a Priest without any ordination.* The Church could, by its authority, recognize special gifts. The variations in custom are a sufficient sign that the authority and power of a Bishop in ordaining depended, not on anything inherent in his office, but on the commission that he had received from the Church and the gift of the Spirit given him in answer to the prayers of the Church at his consecration. Fourthly, it must not, I think, be overlooked, how important a part rightful election played in the validity of a Bishop's position. When Cyprian writes to emphasize the rightful authority of Cornelius and the sin of schismatic opposition to him, it is the correct character of his election to which he refers. Cornelius had been appointed Bishop by the judgment of God and the testimony of his fellow-Bishops. He had

* The Canons of Hippolitus, vi. 43-47 (ed. Achelis, p. 67).

passed through every ecclesiastical grade. He had been consecrated by many Bishops. He had received the testimony of nearly all the clergy, and the vote of all the people then present. He had been ordained in the Church, and he who does not preserve the unity of the Church has no true ordination.*

The theology that lay behind the rules of the Church was that the work of the Church is the work of God; that He, in answer to the prayers of the Church, gives His Spirit. Ordination was Sacramental. It had been so from the beginning; but the nature of a Sacrament is shown when we realize that the essential of ordination always has been prayer with the laying on of hands. God answers the prayers of His Church. The Church orders the proper method of approaching Him."**

This offers, I think, one of the sanest views of ordination that I have come across. It is the view of a modern scholar of the first rank, and if it becomes widespread, I feel that it will go far toward bringing about the much desired unity of the Christian Church. The late Bishop Gore gives a very full study of the whole question,*** but his work represents the thinking of the old school which believed in the theory that the gift of the Spirit was handed down from Bishop to Bishop by the rite of laying on of hands. In the light of modern scholarship and careful research to determine the facts, I find it difficult to agree with Bishop Gore's views, and choose to cast my lot

* Cyprian, Epistles, lv. 8, and lxvii. 4. ** Op. cit., p. 131.
 *** The Church and The Ministry, pp. 53 to 95. Gore, in addition to giving his own views, lists a wealth of reference material.

with Dr. Headlam in what seems to be the logical interpretation of the evidence concerning Christian Ordination.

Thus we see that out of the heretical controversies, the Old Catholic Church developed ideas of universality, orthodoxy and unity, formulated a creed, adopted a canon of New Testament literature, established proof of the succession of its Bishops from Apostolic times, and set a standard for the ordination of its clergy. Let us now consider briefly the growth in importance of the Roman Church, and the Constitutional development of the Church during the Greco-Roman period.

The Roman Church had been of importance since the time of St. Paul. To that Church he wrote one of his most noteworthy Epistles. Even before the rise of the Petrine tradition, the importance of Rome was generally recognized. Even before the close of the first century, Clement addressed a letter anonymously to the Corinthians in the name of the whole Roman congregation, and spoke as though it was expected that their wishes would be obeyed.* Ignatius addressed the Church at Rome as "having the presidency of love".** And Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, writing about 185, not only pictured the Roman Church as founded

* I Clement 59, 63.

** Romans.

by Peter and Paul, but declares that "it is a matter of necessity that every church should agree with this church".*

The controversy between the Roman Church and the Church in Asia Minor, over the celebration of Easter, saw the first important triumph for the Western Church. About 190 the problem became so acute that synods were held in Rome, Palestine, and elsewhere which decided in favor of the Roman practice. The Churches of Asia Minor, led by Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus, refused to conform, and Victor, Bishop of Rome, excommunicated the opposing congregations. This high handed action led to many protests, but it was a marked assertion of Roman authority.**

"These embittered controversies were costly to Asia Minor, and any possible rivalry on equal terms of Ephesus and Rome was out of the question. The collapse of Jewish Christian leadership, the apparent lack at Antioch of men of eminence in the second century, and the decline of influence of Asia Minor left Rome, by 200, the most eminent and influential center of Christianity--a position of which the Roman Bishops had the will and the ability to make full use. The rise of Alexandria and of Carthage to importance in the Christian thought and life of the third century could not rob Rome of its leadership. Their attainment of Christian significance was far younger than that of the capital of the empire."***

By the middle of the third century, the tend-

* Heresies III, iii 2. **Eusebius, "Church History," V, 23, 24.

encies begun under the struggle with Gnosticism and Montanism and the lesser heresies, had taken fruit to such an extent that the Church as an organization had taken on most of the constitutional features which were to characterize it throughout the period of the dominance of Greco-Roman culture. As we have already seen, this development was most manifested in the increase of the power of the Bishops. The "gifts of the Spirit," which had been very real to the thought of Christians of the Apostolic and sub-Apostolic ages, and which might be possessed by any one, were now more of a tradition rather than a vital reality. These "gifts" were now the official possession of the clergy, especially of the Bishops. The Bishops were the divinely appointed guardians of the deposit of the faith, and therefore those who could determine what was heresy. They were the leaders of the worship, and the disciplinary officers of the Congregation. As given full expression by Cyprian of Carthage, writing about 250, the foundation of the Church is the unity of the Bishops.*

To Cyprian, the Episcopate was a unit, and each Bishop was a representative of all its powers, on an equality with all the other Bishops. But even in his time the

* Epistles lxvi 8, lxviii.

Bishops of the great, politically influential cities of the empire were attaining a superiority in dignity over others, which those at Rome, we have seen, were quick to translate into a superiority of jurisdiction.

By the beginning of the third century clergy were being distinguished from Laity. The technical use of the terms "laity" and "clergy" was a gradual development. The earliest Christian use of the term "laity" was by Clement of Rome,* while the term "clergy" occurs in an untechnical sense in I Peter 5:3. Clergy was the common expression for the "orders" of magistrates and dignitaries of the Roman empire, and it is probable that through common usage they came into use by the Christians to designate the orders of the ministry. Tertullian speaks of a "clerical order" and "ecclesiastical orders".**

Admission to clerical orders was by Ordination, referred to above, a rite which certainly goes back to the earliest days of the Church, at least as a sign of separation for a special duty.*** The normal process of the choice of a Bishop by the middle of the third century was nomination by the other clergy, especially the Presbyters, of the city; the approval of neighboring Bishops, and rat-

* I Clement, 40.

** Monogamy, 12.

*** Acts 6:6, 13:3; also I Tim. 4:14, 5:22; 2 Tim. 1:6.

ification or election by the congregation.* Ordination followed at the hands of at least three Bishops. The choice of Presbyters, Deacons, and lower clergy lay in the hands of the local Bishop, who also ordained them.**

The Presbyters were the Bishops' advisors. With his consent they administered the Sacraments.*** They preached also. As congregations grew more numerous in a city, a Presbyter would be placed in immediate charge of each one, and the degree of the importance of the Presbyterate once more took an upward turn from the depression it had fallen into soon after the rise of the monarchical Episcopate.

The Deacons were immediately responsible to the Bishop, and were his assistants in the care of the poor and in matters of finance. They also aided in the worship and the discipline of the congregation.

Bishops, Presbyters and Deacons constituted the major orders of the clergy, while below them were the minor orders. A letter of Bishop Cornelius of Rome, written about 251, gives us an insight into the conditions in that important Church. Under the single Bishop in Rome there

* Cyprian, Epistles, li.-lv.8, lxvi.-lxviii.2, lxvii.4,5.

** Ibid., xxiii.-xxix, xxxiii.-xxxix.5, xxxiv.-xl.

*** Tertullian, Baptism, 17.

were forty-six Presbyters, seven Deacons, (the primitive number survived in remembrance of Acts 6:5), seven sub-Deacons, forty-two Acolytes, and fifty-two Exorcists, Readers and Janitors.*

"In practical Christian life the clergy, by the middle of the third century were a distinct, close-knit spiritual rank, on whom the laity were religiously dependent, and who were in turn supported by laymen's gifts."**

The acceptance of Christianity as the religion of the empire gave to the Emperors a practical authority over the Church. By the time of Justinian, the Emperor undertook to declare on his own initiative, what was sound doctrine, and to a considerable extent regulated churchly administration.***

As in the third century, the Bishops continued to be the centers of local ecclesiastical administration, and their power tended to increase. By the Bishops the other clergy were not merely ordained, but the pay of those below them was in their hands. The First Council of Nicea provided that other clergy should not remove from a diocese without the Bishop's consent.**** In each of the provinces the Bishop of the capital city was the metropolitan, who,

* Eusebius, Church History, VI, 43:11. **Walker, Op. cit., p.91.
*** Justinian, Anathemas. **** Council of Nicea, Canons.

according to the synod of Antioch in 341, should "have precedence in rank---that the other Bishops do nothing extraordinary without him."*

Constantine made the clergy a privileged class and exempted them from taxation.** Then the government, anxious not to lose its revenues through the entrance into clerical office of the well-to-do, ordered that only those "of small fortune" should be ordained.***

It was felt that the clergy should be moral examples to their flocks, and celibacy early came to be prized as belonging to the holier Christian life. Pope Leo I held that even sub-Deacons should refrain from marriage,**** although it was centuries before this rule was universally enforced in the Western Church. In the East, the practice which still continues was established by the time of Justinian, that only celibates could be Bishops, while clergy below that rank could marry before ordination. This rule, though not without advantages, has had the great disadvantage of blocking promotion in the Eastern Church, and leading to the choice of Bishops prevailingly from the ranks of the monks.*****

* Synod of Antioch, Canons.

** Constantine, Ep. to Anulinus, in Eusebius, Ch. Hist. X, 7.

*** Theodosian Code quoted in Ayer p. 280.

**** Letters, xiv. 5. ***** Walker, Op. cit., p. 166.

Jerome, (c.340-420), Augustine, (354-430), and Gregory, (c.540-604), were the three outstanding characters in this period of the Church's history. An account of their lives would be out of place but no treatise on the early Church would be complete without some mention of them. Jerome was the ablest scholar that the ancient Western Church could boast. He was more of a scholar than a theologian, his chief bid to fame being his translation of the Scriptures, known as the Vulgate, and still in use in the Roman Catholic Church. Augustine was the great theologian of the day. He was the father of much that was most characteristic in medieval Roman Catholicism. He had a high valuation of the visible Catholic Church as that only in which the true infusion of love by the Holy Spirit may be found. His greatest work was his City of God. Gregory, known as Gregory the Great, was the interpreter of Augustine to the Middle Ages. In all departments of ecclesiastical activity Gregory stood forth the most conspicuous leader of his time. In him the Western Church of the Middle Ages already exhibited its characteristic traits, whether of doctrine, life, worship, or organization. Its growth was to be in the direction in which Gregory had moved.*

* Walker, Op. cit., p. 193.

Let us now sum up this portion of our argument.

We have seen in the Catholic Church of the early centuries, the growth and development of the fundamental ideas of Christ and of the Apostolic Church in a manner adapted to the Hellenic world of the day. The Church was the home of the Spirit and the home of Salvation, with chrystalized ideas of universality, orthodoxy and unity. In conflict with the Heresies, the Catholic Church formulated a Creed, adopted a canon of New Testament books, and looked to the Apostles as the founders of the principal Episcopates, and to the succession of the Apostolic doctrines through its Bishops. Admission to the orders of the ministry was by ordination according to set standards, which was at least, a sign of separation for a special duty. The Roman Church grew in importance, and the Easter Controversy saw the Church at Rome firmly established as the stronghold of Christianity. By the third century the distinction was made between laity and clergy, with the clergy a close-knit spiritual rank on whom the laity were religiously dependent. Bishops, Presbyters and Deacons constituted the principal orders of the ministry, while below these were the minor orders, which included sub-Deacons, Acolytes, Readers, Exorcists, and Janitors. The functions of the three chief orders of the ministry were essentially those assigned to

them in the Primitive Church. The Bishops increased in power steadily during this period, and the clergy as such came to be looked upon as the moral examples of their flocks.

The fundamental principle which seems to emerge is that it is the Church that is supreme in all things spiritual. The authority of a Bishop comes to him because it is conferred by the Church of which he is the representative. It is to the Catholic Church that the Spirit has been given, and therefore within the Church alone are all the gifts and blessings, sacramental and other, that the Spirit gives.

III

The Episcopacy and Church Unity.

We have dwelt at some length on the history of the doctrine of the ministry of the Christian Church, laying necessary foundations, to ascertain carefully the contents and the meagerness of the teaching of our Lord, and of the customs and the regulations of the Apostolic period, and the interpretation or these teachings and customs by the Old Catholic Church. We now come to the constructive part of our work. We have now to attempt to picture the ministry of today and tomorrow as it ought to be, our aim being to show that only through an Episcopally ordained ministry, can true Church Unity be secured.

In the Creed we state that we believe in One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church. By that we mean in the first place that we believe that Christ intended to found a society which should unite His followers in the bonds of fellowship and brotherhood. We also state that we believe that that society is One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic. Which statement appears at first sight to be so at variance with the facts that we must wonder at times how we dare make such a claim. There are many Christian bodies instead of just one. Some of them claim to be the true Church to

the exclusion of all others. None of them can claim to be holy in any complete sense, for they all have many unworthy members. And taking the word "Catholic" in the sense of universal, it is clear that in no real sense can such an epithet be justified. When the Church is said to be Apostolic, it means that it possesses the uncorrupted teaching of the Apostles. There is such a diversity in the teaching of the various Christian bodies today that it is obvious that in no real sense can most of them exactly reproduce the Apostolic doctrine; and it is doubtful whether any of them do. So it is clear that the statement that we make in the Creed is somewhat hazardous.

But if we examine each of these ideas separately, we shall find that there is a justification for the claims. What do we mean when we say that the Church is Holy? It is clear that the idea behind the statement is Biblical. In the First Epistle of Peter we read, "As He which calleth you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation".* And throughout the New Testament Christians are spoken of as "the saints", or the "holy ones". Holy in Greek and in Hebrew means set apart, consecrated. The Church, therefore, is Holy because it is a society of those set apart

* I Peter 1:15

for God's service. But at this point we must face the reality that there are many in the Church who cannot rightly be called saints. But at best, the members of the Church are striving to be fit for the service for which they have been set apart. So the Church is Holy not in reality but in ideal. It is holy because it strives to be so. But perfect holiness is only attainable in the final consummation of the Kingdom of God.

What do we mean when we say that the Church is Catholic? We have already seen that in the Creed the sense in which the word is used is universal. It means that the Church is for the whole world. In it there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free. All are one in Jesus Christ. But here again it is obvious that we are not stating facts. In no real sense can it be said that the Church unites all mankind to Christ. Here also we are dealing with an ideal, with an aim not yet accomplished. The Church is Catholic because its high purpose is to unite all mankind in the bonds of brotherhood, and until that ideal is realized its work will be unfinished.

What do we mean by saying that the Church is Apostolic? Here there are two characteristics implied. The Church is the same Church that was founded by the Apostles, and it possesses the same teaching which the Apostles

gave.* But here once more we must face the question, does it really do so? Several existing Christian societies claim to be the Apostolic Church, but when we come to examine their teachings we find that they differ greatly from those originally given by the Apostles. This being so, we must come to the conclusion that the claim of all Christian bodies to be Apostolic suggests at least that no one of them is so completely. Here again, we are coniusing an ideal with an actual fact. The Church is a body that exists for the purpose of handing on and teaching, of expanding and explaining the revelation of Christ given to the world by His Apostles. Its aim is ever a complete understanding and explaining of its message, but it cannot here attain that ideal completely. Being Apostolic is an ideal as much as that of being Holy and Catholic.

In what sense do we say that the Church is One? The teaching of the New Testament is clear. Christian unity is taught as of paramount importance. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ."** There is one body, and one spirit.....one Lord, one faith, one baptism....."*** It is only in Christian unity that

* Headlam, *Op. cit.*, p. 211.

the full meaning of Christianity can be attained. But again, how can we reconcile our confession of Christian unity with the facts? Our conclusion here as in the case of the other statements of the Creed must be that we are dealing with an ideal and not a reality. When we say that the Church is "one" we mean that Christ intended it to be "one", as He intended it to be "holy". The Apostles founded it as "one", and it must be our continuous aim to make it "one". Perhaps full and perfect unity cannot be attained here, but toward that end we must all work.

When we confess in the Creed our belief in a Church, One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, we mean that Christ founded a society that was designed to be one, holy in life, world-embracing, preserving and teaching the faith which He delivered to the Apostles. That is the ideal that should be constantly before all Christians.

The late Dr. Liddon states the same argument we have been following in a clear and forceful way in one of his letters.

"The answer to Père Hyacinthe's argument," he writes, in my mind, is as follows:

"1. It is true that our Lord meant His Body to be visibly one. St. Paul speaks of one Body as well as of one Spirit.

"2. He also meant it to be perfectly holy, without spot or blemish, and catholic--that is, literally the religion of the whole human race. These last two points I need not prove to you; they are admitted.

"3. Can any one Christian body--the Church of Rome any more than the Church of England or the Orthodox Eastern Church--pretend to full possession of the 'note' of sanctity? There are saints in her, no doubt. But the net contains more bad fish than good; the sanctity is attributed to an abstraction, not to the concrete mass of men and women who receive the Sacraments of the Roman Church. In a like manner: is the Church of Rome as yet catholic, or anything like it, in the sense of the promises? Why--all Christians taken together do not form a third of the human race; and unbelievers are telling us every day that the promised conquest of the world is an utter failure. And on this point, how do we reply to them, whether at Rome or in Oxford? We say that the ideal range and the ultimate fulfilment of these promises is one thing; the historical travail of the Church another. Centuries are nothing to God. The Church is catholic enough to make us sure that she will one day be literally more so; holy enough to satisfy us that Christ is in the midst of her. These 'notes' will be completed one day, and, meanwhile, we wait in patience.

"4. Why is it not to be thus with the 'note of unity'? You say that unity is a visible, matter-of-fact thing, which we do or do not see. Yes, but the promise: 'All nations shall fall down before Him; all people shall do His service', is a matter-of-fact promise which has or has not been kept. You say, that unity was to be an evidence of Christianity patent to the eyes of heathens. Yes, but a holy charity was also to be such an evidence: 'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, that ye have charity one towards another.' In point of fact, the note of Unity like all the other notes of Sanctity and world-embracing Universality, has been only partially realized in history. As yet, between the promise and its fulfillment, there is a gap."*

We can sum up in Dr. Headlam's words.

* "Life and letters of Henry Parry Liddon", by John Octavius Johnson, p. 126.

"The Christian Church consists of all baptized Christians who believe in the Lord Jesus. The words of our Lord, the commands and practices of the Apostles, tell us that this society should be one--a united, living organism. At present, owing to the sin and imperfection of mankind, it is not what it should be: It is divided into a number of bodies, all imperfect in their life and teaching, who have failed to accomplish their mission. It is our duty to do all in our power to restore this unity and create a united Church which will more fitly represent the Apostolic ideal. To do so we should begin by being loyal to the religious society to which we belong. We should aim at making it fulfil adequately the ideal of a Christian Church by purity of life, by moral and spiritual power. It is our duty by wise thought, by judgement and learning, to make its teaching and order as truly representative as possible of the Apostolic ideal. It is our duty to do all that in us lies so far as is consistent with Christian truth to break down the barriers between ourselves and other Christian bodies."*

Dr. Headlam sets forth the acceptance of the Catholic Creed as one basis of Christian unity. His reasons are:

"1. The basis of union must be discipleship of Christ and of the Gospel which He taught. The record of that is contained in the Scriptures, and the Creed represents the way in which the universal consciousness of the Christian Church has formulated its belief.

"2. The Creed come to us with the credentials of wider experience than any other document. If there is anything which can claim in any real sense to be Catholic it is the Creed. It is accepted by the vast majority of Christian societies, although some of them may ascribe to it more authority and some less. It is, there-

* Op. cit., p. 226.

fore, a document behind our divisions which expresses the points in which we are united.

"3. Christian experience has shown us how the most fruitful causes of division have been the many attempts which have been made to add to the necessary doctrine of the Church, the desire to impose more and more on others, the passion for a complete and logical orthodoxy. It is these which have created all those sectarian documents which have been the source and the sigh of Christian divisions and must be all alike dispensed with.

"4. It is a fundamental Catholic rule that no one must add to the Christian Creed, or put forward any other document in the place of it, or in addition to it. We English Churchmen, at any rate, inasmuch as we claim to be guided by Catholic principles, must obey that rule and thus set an example to other religious bodies."*

The word Catholic has been used freely throughout this argument. Like every other great word it has often been misapplied. Often it is used in the narrowest possible sense to designate something sectional or sectarian. But that is no reason for not using it in its purest sense, to designate the universality of the true faith. As we learn to sweep away these narrower meanings and to recognize the fact that there is in reality a faith once delivered to the saints, the teaching of which has in a very real sense been the same through the ages of Christianity, we shall come to see that there is today a real basis for a common Catholic Christianity, founded on a belief in the historical Christ,

* Op. cit., p. 240.

the Son of God.

The purpose of the Church is to bind all Christians together as members of one society in Christ, and that is the meaning of the Catholic Church. The question now arises, how is that society to be organized in order best to accomplish this purpose? What is to be the outward form of the Christian Church?

It is clear, I think, from a study of the evidence, that the foundation of the society which we call the Christian Church was a part of God's plan, and to that end, Jesus appointed His Apostles, who became the first ministers of the society. But it is just as clear that He did not give directions as to the form or the organization of the Church, and the organization that was ultimately developed was different from anything which He personally established. The Apostles developed a ministry adapted to the needs of the times, but they, too, gave no directions, so far as history records, as to what should be the form of the society. And after the death of the Apostles we find the Church ruled over by officers different from those that had existed in the Apostolic Church, although these were doubtless linked to the Apostolic order by a close organic connection.

We can be fairly certain that it was intended

that the Church should possess a properly organized ministry, and we can be just as certain that it was not intended that any particular form should be essential. The Church was free to create its own ministry, and it is presumed that it might also change at some future time what it had itself created, or adapt it to meet new conditions. Which reminds us that we cannot say that any form of ministry is essential to entitle an organization to be called a church, nor can we say that any particular society has no claim to be considered a part of the Church because it does not boast a particular form of ministry. It is important to keep these points in mind when making any claims in favor of Episcopacy as the right form of Church government.

The argument in favor of the Episcopacy as the form of organization of the ministry of the Christian Church can be supported on two grounds.

In the first place, Episcopacy has far greater authority than any other form of ministry. True, as we have seen, the Episcopacy has no certain Apostolic authority, but neither has any other form. Although the government of the local community was Presbyterian in Apostolic days, that was not the government of the Church as a whole, for it is to be remembered that the local ministry did not hold a very important place as long as the Apostles were

alive. Congregationalism likewise has no real authority, for in no sense does it represent the form in which the Church was organized. "Both of these forms, indeed, as they exist at the present day, represent antiquarian revivals, an artificial imitation of certain aspects of the Church polity of Apostolic times. They were devised in response to a real need and because of defects in the Church life of later times, and for that reason they may claim to have been legitimate developments, but they do not come to us with any authority behind them."*

What we can claim for Episcopacy is the clear authority of the Church. Monarchical Episcopacy dates quite certainly from the close of the Apostolic period, and it was the universal form of Church government from its inception until the Reformation. Since then, although some Christian bodies are otherwise organized, it still remains the form of Church government of the vast majority of Christians. The Roman Church has indeed overlaid it by papal developments, destroying in a large measure the rights and the independence of the Episcopate, but even in that body it remains the basis for Church order. Although it cannot be held that the churches that gave up the Episcopate at

* Headlam, Op. cit., p. 243.

the time of the Reformation were not justified in doing so. The historic Episcopate would appear to end the quest for a basis on which to unite which is older than the schisms, and which comes to us with some real authority.

And secondly, experience has shown that in spite of whatever defects Episcopacy may have had, or may still have, it still forms the best basis for Christian unity. A study of the history of the growth of the Episcopacy reveals that it was as a center of unity that authority was first given to it. Ignatius looked upon it not only as a support of orthodoxy, but of unity.* The Catholic Church which Episcopacy created, was a strong, well ordered society, which remained One for many centuries. And at the Reformation the non-Episcopal churches which sprang up seemed to lack any external unity which could bind them together, and the tendency was toward greater disunion. There appears to be a widespread feeling growing up among non-Episcopal churches today that some more developed form of church organization is needed, to judge from Dr. Headlam's observations in his travels throughout the United Kingdom. He says,

"When I was in Australia I found such a movement

* Smyrnans 8.

existing among the Presbyterians. They wanted officials of the type of Bishops, and that made them approach the Church of England there with a desire for some form of reunion. I understand that the Congregational Church in England has appointed superintendents. I understand also that many of those most anxious for reunion would not only accept Episcopacy, but consider that an Episcopal organization would be in itself a gain. I feel, therefore, that there is here strong grounds for claiming that Episcopacy should be the form of government of a united Church."*

The South India plan of Church union which has caused so much comment throughout the world is another example of the trend toward unity on an Episcopal basis. The plan in brief is this:

"1. Acceptance of all the ministers of the three negotiating bodies, the Anglican Church, the Wesleyan Church and the South India United Church;

"2. Future government of the Church to combine elements of Episcopacy, Presbytery, and Independency, the 'historic Episcopate' in particular being maintained, but no theory of its origin or meaning being required;

"3. During the time when there will still be ministers of different kinds of ordination in the Church, an honorable agreement not to over-ride or injure the conscience in any arrangements that are made;

"4. No attempt made in the beginning to get agreement on all points, but many matters, e.g. the use of Confirmation, left to the United Church to settle.

"this scheme is still being discussed by the negotiating churches, but it is difficult not to feel that the zeal for unity, so long tested in intimate negotiations, must win through to suc-

* Op. cit., p. 245.

cess."*

The Lambeth Conference of the Bishops of the Anglican Communion, which met in 1930, considered the plan and approved it, although it was not submitted with any idea of acceptance or rejection. The Lambeth Conference has no constitutional authority to accept or reject such proposals. In resolution 11 of the Lambeth Conference of 1920, "The Conference recognizes that the task of effecting union with other Christian Communions must be undertaken by the various national, regional or provincial authorities of the Churches within the Anglican Communion". The Church of India, Burma and Ceylon recognized this fact, but desired, in a spirit of fellowship, to ascertain the views of the Bishops belonging to other Provinces of the Anglican Communion, inasmuch as the whole of that Communion may be greatly affected by the adoption of the plan. The Conference offered the counsel asked of them and closed their report with these words:

"Having thus offered the counsel asked of us, we thank God for the signs of the guidance of His Holy Spirit as manifested by the degree and nature of the agreement already reached with regard to the Proposed Scheme of Union; we pray that the Bishops and other members of the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon may still receive that guidance in the decisions

* "International Review of Missions", Vol. XXI No. 81, p. 103.

which they will be responsible for making in this regard, and that in the result the united Church of South India may by God's blessing be brought into existence to His glory and the extension of His Kingdom."*

It should be made clear at this point I think, that we of the Anglican Communion in no way confine the Church to our own communion. The organization of the Holy Catholic Church has been explained as being administered by Bishops, but its membership includes all baptized persons, whether they be Greeks, Roman, Anglican, or Protestants. No one would deny that Christ has faithful servants in every denomination, nor would any one deny that what they are and what they do is the result of the grace they received from Him. The late Bishop Gore has admirably stated this for us:

"We know quite well how the Nonconformist bodies in England grew up. We know quite well under what conditions they have been recruited and gained their strength. It has been largely, at least, because of our failure to be what a Church ought to be. We have by our sins and shortcomings supplied them with only too much excuse for separation. It will therefore cause us the less surprise to find tokens of the action of the Holy Spirit most plainly among them, not only among those who in virtue of baptism are individually members of the Church, but quite as obviously among the Quakers (Friends) and elsewhere where baptism is rejected. I am sure we ought to recognize, as frankly as possible, that God has been pleased to work with a full measure

* Report of the Lambeth Conference, 1930, p. 129.

of His grace far beyond all normal channels and laws of validity. I trust that the attitude of contempt which is so common in Romanists towards us and has been so common in Anglicans toward Nonconformists will become very rapidly a thing of the past. I trust we shall learn to hold with them the fullest measure of Christian fellowship which we can hold without faithlessness to the principles we stand for."*

The Heart of Christianity is yearning for the healing of its unhappy divisions and the restoration of a visible unity. The war especially revealed the weakness of a disrupted Christendom, and men who never before clearly realized the need of unity are now praying for it, planning for it, anxiously awaiting signs of its approach.

But the basis for that unity will probably have to be the threefold ministry of the Episcopate, the ministry of unity, in order that that unity shall be preserved. "The greatest possible bond of unity is to be found," says Bishop Fiske, "in the one authoritative Ministry locally adapted, working in a Church where there is not only room but welcome for many varieties of thought and worship."** And he continues:

"If I may be allowed a homely illustration, we have an example of the possibility of such unity in variety in a Church which has succeeded in holding together in loyal membership High, Low, Catholic, Broad, Evangelical, Sacramentalist-- each emphasizing one part of the many-sided

*"The Religion of the Church", p. 156.
** "The Faith By Which We Live", p. 233.

truth yet none impelled to destroy the unity of the body in order to strengthen its own teaching, each free to hold its cherished truth and yet, through necessary contact with other truth, saved from wholly succumbing to the heresy of the partial and the fragmentary."*

This is the position held by Dr. Armitage Robinson.

"It is for the unity of the whole," he says, "that the historic three-fold ministry stands. It grew out of the need for preservation of unity when the Apostles themselves were withdrawn. It is, humanly speaking, inconceivable that unity can be reestablished on any other basis. This is not to say that a particular doctrine of Apostolic Succession must needs be held by all Christians alike. But the principle of transmission of ministerial authority makes for unity, while the view that ministry originates afresh at the behest of a particular Church or congregation makes for division and subdivision. We have the happiness to live in days in which a reaction has set in against the long process of the division and subdivision of Christendom. Earnest spirits everywhere around us are yearning after unity. On a reasonable interrogation of history the principle can be seen to emerge that ministry was the result of commission from those who had themselves received authority to transmit it. In other words we are compelled to the recognition that, at least for the purposes of unity, the Episcopate is the successor of the Apostolate."**

But we must have a clear understanding as to what we mean by Episcopate. It will be remembered from our study of the organization of the Old Catholic Church, that the Bishop was not separated from the people. He was a representative Bishop, and the clergy and the laity had a

* Ibid. ** Quoted by Fiske, Op. cit., p. 234.

strong voice in his election. Cyprian claims never to act without the concurrence of the clergy and the laity. And he bids a diocese separate itself from an unworthy Bishop.* The authority of the Bishop, we have seen, was derived from and was dependent on the Church. But gradually there was a separation between the Bishops and the clergy and the Bishop and the people. The causes were various. Headlam outlines a few. "They were partly determined by and came from the theory of the ministry which owed its origin to St. Augustine. They were partly practical--the authority which the Bishop acquired in the break-up of society when the civil power failed, the want of machinery by which the clergy and the laity might express their opinion in the large dioceses which grew up beyond the Alps: the absence, in fact, of anything like representative government."** Thus the medieval Bishop was evolved, and from the medieval Bishop there evolved the Anglican Bishop of today.

It is not the medieval Bishop or the modern Anglican Bishop that Church Unity needs. It is the primitive Bishop of the Old Catholic Church, the constitutional Bishop, that the present time needs. It is not the Epis-

* Headlam, Op. cit., p. 245 ** Ibid.

copacy represented by the medieval Church, nor the Anglican counterpart which is desired as the basis of Church Unity. We must return to the true Catholic Church for our conception of what the Episcopacy of reunited Christendom is to be.

But we must concern ourselves about more than the form of the Christian ministry. The question of validity of Orders and of ordination has often been a cause of controversy. So we must answer the question, what do we mean by a valid ordination? What do we mean by the validity of Orders?

I do not intend to go into a discussion of the refusal of the Roman Church to recognize Anglican Orders. There is too much involved, and such a discussion would be outside the purpose of this paper. Suffice it to say here that Anglican Orders, judged by an historical standard, can be proved sufficient and valid.* And as the result of our investigation we can say that on the authority of Scripture, what is necessary for a valid ordination is laying on of hands with prayer. No other form or ceremony can be considered essential. And as regards intention, a point concerning which the Roman Church is most insistent,

* Headlam, Op. cit., p. 250.

suffice it to say that all that is necessary is that the Church should intend to do, and should make it clear by its actions and its prayers that it intends to do, exactly what the Apostles did when they ordained.

But there is a further question that should be touched upon, and that is, who is competent to ordain? Who is to be the minister of ordination?

The rule of the Church has been, from an early time, that the proper minister of ordination is the Bishop. The origin of this rule is difficult to trace, and we have already discussed certain phases of the early history of ordination. We cannot claim the authority of our Lord or of the Apostolic Church in behalf of the rule. We have no certain evidence that the rule existed in the Church during the second century, and it is only in the third century that we can be certain that the rule prevailed. In the fourth century the rule received full conciliar authority, and became a part of the canon law of both the Eastern and Western Church. The Episcopal Church maintains that without a Bishop there is no valid ordination, and consequently that no Sacrament except Baptism can be validly celebrated. A Bishop is not only the proper, but the necessary minister of ordination.

The Episcopal Church has preserved the rule of

Episcopal ordination, definitely stating that none might hold office in the Church unless he has received Episcopal ordination or consecration. But the Church does not desire to condemn the orders of other religious bodies, and this rule pertains only to the Episcopal Church.

All of which raises the question, how much importance are we to attach to the rule of the necessity of Episcopal Orders for a reunited Church? And answering the question entails a brief consideration of the meaning of Sacraments and the meaning of valid Orders.

There are two theories about Sacraments. The developed medieval and Roman doctrine is that in ordination a certain character is given to the person ordained which enables him to do certain things. As it is sometimes expressed, the character given to a Priest gives him the power "to make the Body and Blood of Christ". The character of a Bishop is the power of giving to others this power of making the Body and Blood of Christ. This character is indelible and always remains to a man even if he be an unbeliever or a heretic, provided he makes use of the correct matter and form.*

But I agree with Dr. Headlam that this was not

*"Summa Theologica", Pars III, quoted by Headlam, p. 257.

the conception that was held in the Primitive Church. He says:

"Before the time of St. Augustine there is no trace of this character indelebilis. A quite different theory prevailed. The power of a Bishop or Presbyter depended upon the Church. If the people separated from a Bishop he ceased to be a Bishop; if he became a heretic or a schismatic he ceased to be able to confer Orders or consecrate the Eucharist. St. Augustine, in order to justify the custom of the African Church, which in the cause of unity and charity, had ceased to rebaptize or reordain heretics when they returned to the Church, modified this theory. He held that just as a man who is baptized does not lose the effect of his baptism if he become a heretic, and therefore need not be rebaptized, so it is with ordination. But although the result of this teaching was to create the medieval theory of the ministry, it was not the opinion of St. Augustine himself that the essence of a Sacrament lay in the power of the Bishop or Priest. He held that the Sacraments were the Sacraments of the Church, and therefore of Christ. They were efficacious because they were celebrated within the Church, and because it was not really the Bishop or Priest who performed the Sacrament, but Christ on behalf of His Church. It was Christ who baptized. It was Christ who ordained. It was Christ who consecrated the Eucharist.

"I would suggest that this is the true theory of Sacraments. They are the Sacraments of the Church, performed through the ministers of the Church appointed for that purpose. In answer to the prayers of the Church God, through Christ, gives us His Holy Spirit and the Spiritual gifts for which we pray. It is not the Bishop who gives the Holy Ghost in confirmation or ordination, but God who, through Christ, sends His Holy Spirit in answer to the prayers of the Church, offered up through their duly appointed minister. It is not the Priest who transforms the wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, but our Lord who, through His Holy Spirit, gives us the spiritual food of His Body and Blood in answer to the

prayers of the Church offered up in the Church by a duly appointed minister of the Church."*

These are the two theories about Sacraments. One was developed in the Medieval Church from certain teachings of St. Augustine. It is the dominant theory of the Roman Catholic Church and has been adopted by the Anglo-Catholic branch of the Anglican Church. It exalts the minister and ascribes the efficacy of the Sacrament to a definite power with which he has been endowed, and on that basis a mechanical, almost magical theology has been built up.

The other theory looks upon the Bishop and the Priest as the appointed Ministers of the Church, whose acts are efficacious because they are the act of the Church. It is Christ who performs the Sacrament. This theory was so definitely that of the early Church that it was held that if the Bishop was not acting in the Church and on behalf of the Church, his acts were invalid and ineffective. The Sacrament that he performed was no Sacrament. This was the theory held by St. Augustine himself.

The first theory is hard and mechanical and unreal, while the second is living and real, and is the theory which combined with a broader doctrine of the Church will

* Op. cit., p. 257-58.

form a basis for reunion.

In connection with the theory of Apostolic Succession we find that most of the teachings in its favor are rather mechanical. But we can be fairly certain that as an external sign of the unity and continuity of the Church, the fact of Apostolic Succession has been of supreme value.

The Church, entrusted with the sacred gift of the Sacraments gradually laid down its rule of Orders, based upon the rules and customs of the Apostles. The purpose of the rule was the promotion of unity, and it was with that purpose that the Eucharist was made dependent on the Bishop. And it was also with that purpose that the rules of Episcopal Ordination were accepted and made universal. The Bishop was the officer not alone of the local church, but of the Catholic Church, and therefore the Church, as a whole, must take part in his consecration. To secure this, the rule grew up that not fewer than three Bishops must be present and take part in the ceremony. This rule was successful, and the unity of the Church was preserved by a strong system of order. The local church came to be a conspicuous part of the whole Catholic Church, and each generation was solemnly, by the visible sign of succession, connected with past generations.

Any attempt at the restoration of Christian unity

brings the question of what form the Church should take. And it is both wise and natural to say that it is that form of Church Order which preserved Church unity before. Whether or not we believe that the historic Episcopacy is necessary for valid Orders it has been and is necessary to secure Christian unity, and therefore it must be the rule of the re-united Church of God.

The Lambeth Conference of 1920, in an effort to aid the cause of Church Unity, passed the following resolutions with regard to the ministry:

"1. A ministry of the Word and Sacrament is a Divine ordinance for the Church, and has been since the days of the Apostles an integral part of its organized life.

"2. It is a ministry within the Church exercising representatively, in the name and by the authority of the Lord Who is the Head of the Church, the powers and functions which are inherent in the Church.

"3. It is a ministry of the Church, and not merely of any part thereof.

"4. No man can take this ministry upon himself. It must be conferred by the Church, acting through those who have authority given to them in the Church to confer it. There must be not only an inward call of the Spirit, but also an outward and visible call and commission by the Church.

"5. It is in accordance with Apostolic practice and the ancient custom of the Church that this commission should be given through Ordination, with prayer and the laying on of hands by those who have authority given them to ordain.

"6. We believe that in Ordination, together with this commission to minister, Divine Grace is given through the Holy Spirit in response to prayer and faith for the fulfillment

of the charge so committed.

"7. Within the many Christian Communions into which in the course of history Christendom has been divided, various forms of ministry have grown up according to the circumstances of these several Communions and their belief as to the Mind of Christ and the guidance of the New Testament. These various ministries of Word and Sacrament have been, in God's providence, manifestly and abundantly used by the Holy Spirit in His work of 'enlightening the world, converting sinners, and perfecting saints'. But the differences which have arisen with regard to the authority and functions of these various forms of ministry have been and are the occasion of manifold doubts, questions, and misunderstandings. For the allaying of doubts and scruples in the future, and for the more perfect realization of the truth that the ministry is a ministry of the Church, and not merely of any part thereof, means should be provided for the United Church which we desire, whereby its ministry may be acknowledged by every part thereof as possessing the authority of the whole body.

"8. In view of the fact that the Episcopate was from early times and for many centuries accepted, and by the greater part of Christendom is still accepted, as the means whereby this authority of the whole body is given, we agree that it ought to be accepted as such for the United Church of the future.

"9. Similarly, in view of the place which the Council of Presbyters and the Congregation of the faithful had in the constitution of the early Church, and the preservation of these elements of Presbyteral and Congregational order in large sections of Christendom, we agree that they should be maintained with a representative and constitutional Episcopate as permanent elements in the order and life of the United Church.

"10. The acceptance of Episcopal Ordination for the future would not imply the acceptance of any particular theory as to its origin or character, or the disowning of past ministries of Word and Sacrament otherwise received which have, together with those received by Episcopal Ordination, been used and blessed by the Spirit of

God."*

I am convinced that the more these resolutions are considered, the more fully it will be felt that they represent the various traditional elements of the Christian ministry, and that they will form, when the time is ripe, an adequate basis upon which Christian re-union may take place.

I believe wholeheartedly in the value of the Episcopacy and Episcopal Ordination for the Christian Church. And I feel that no real re-union can take place except on this basis, but it is also true that we of the Anglican Communion are often prone to lay far too much stress upon the importance of these things. The ultimate solution of the problem of Church Unity lies, I think, in laying greater stress upon the ethical and spiritual and religious side of Christianity, and in realizing that questions of order are subordinate to the greater issues involved in Christian teaching and life.

The Venerable Bede in his "Ecclesiastical History of England" tells a story of St. Augustine, the first occupant of the See of Canterbury, which may hold a lesson that will be of profit to us. He rightly desired to unite

* "Report of the Lambeth Conference", 1920.

the newly founded Church of the English with the old British Church. To that end conferences were arranged. At the first, British Bishops and doctors, impressed by a miracle which the Saint had wrought, were favourably inclined to hear him, and a larger conference was summoned. The deputation of seven British Bishops, of many learned men, especially of monks from the great monastery of Bangor, while on their way to the conference, sought the advice of a holy and wise man who lived as an anchorite. They asked him whether, in obedience to the preaching of St. Augustine, they should desert the traditions of their fathers. He replied, "If he is a man of God, follow him." "The words of the Lord are, 'Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart'. If that man Augustine is meek and lowly of heart, you can trust that he bears the yoke of Christ himself, and offers it to you: But if he is arrogant and proud, then he comes not from God, and his words do not concern us." They said again, "How can we learn this then?" "Arrange," he replied, "that he and his followers come first to the place of meeting. If, when you approach, he rises up, you may know that he is a servant of Christ, and may hear him readily; but if he despises you and will not rise up when you approach, though you are many more in number, let him too be despised by you." They

did as he advised. When they approached St. Augustine he remained seated. Angry at his pride they refused to listen to him, and although Augustine showed no lack of statesmanship in his proposals the conference failed.

The lesson is this. One of the most flagrant causes of Christian disunion is the assumption of ecclesiastical superiority. Like St. Augustine, it is our desire to heal the wounds in Christ's body, the Church, and build up again a United Church of God. The success of our venture rests upon the spirit in which we approach other religious bodies. If we approach them with a feeling of superiority, and treat them as schismatics, bidding them return to the unity of the Church, all of our work will go for naught. But if we approach them in a spirit of brotherhood, with no feeling of superiority, ready to confess our responsibility as well as theirs for the schisms which have split the Church asunder, we may feel confident that our efforts will be graced with success.

The following appeal to all Christian people was issued by the Bishops of the 1920 Lambeth Conference, and was repeated by the Lambeth Conference of 1930:

"We acknowledge all those who believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, and have been baptized into the name of the Holy Trinity, as sharing with us membership in the universal Church of Christ which is His Body. We believe that the

Holy Spirit has called us in a very solemn and special manner to associate ourselves in penitence and prayer with all those who deplore the divisions of Christian people, and are inspired by the vision and hope of a visible unity of the whole Church.

"1. We believe that God wills fellowship. By God's own act this fellowship was made in and through Jesus Christ, and its life is in His Spirit. We believe that it is God's purpose to manifest this fellowship, so far as this world is concerned, in an outward, visible, and united society, holding one faith, having its own recognized officers, using God-given means of Grace, and inspiring all its members to the world-wide service of the Kingdom of God. This is what we mean by the Catholic Church.

"2. This united fellowship is not visible in the world today. On the one hand there are other ancient Episcopal Communions in East and West, to whom ours is bound by many ties of common faith and tradition. On the other hand there are the great Non-Episcopal Communions, standing for rich elements of truth, liberty and life, which might otherwise have been obscured or neglected. With them we are closely linked by many affinities, racial, historical and spiritual. We cherish the earnest hope that all these Communions, and our own, may be led by the Spirit into the unity of the Faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God. But in fact we are all organized in different groups, each one keeping to itself gifts that rightly belong to the whole fellowship, and tending to live its own life apart from the rest.

"3. The causes of division lie deep in the past, and are by no means simple or wholly blame-worthy. Yet none can doubt that self-will, ambition, and lack of charity among Christians have been principal factors in the mingled process, and that these, together with blindness to the sin of disunion, are still mainly responsible for the breaches of Christendom. We acknowledge this condition of broken fellowship to be contrary to God's will, and we desire frankly to confess our share in the guilt of thus crippling the Body of Christ and hindering the activity of

His Spirit.

"4. The times call us to a new outlook and new measures. The faith cannot be adequately apprehended and the battle of the Kingdom cannot be worthily fought while the Body is divided, and is thus unable to grow up into the fulness of the Life of Christ. The time has come, we believe, for all the separated groups of Christians to agree in forgetting the things which are behind and reaching out toward the goal of a reunited Catholic Church. The removal of the barriers which have risen between them will only be brought about by a new comradeship of those whose faces are definitely set this way.

"The vision which rises before us is that of a Church, genuinely Catholic, loyal to all Truth, and gathering into its fellowship all 'who profess and call themselves Christians', within whose visible unity all the treasures of faith and order, bequeathed as a heritage by the past to the present, shall be possessed in common, and made serviceable to the whole Body of Christ. Within this unity Christian Communions now separated from one another would retain much that has long been distinctive in their methods of worship and service. It is through a rich diversity of life and devotion that the unity of the whole fellowship will be fulfilled."*

The Bishops have made a significant beginning in this appeal to the Christian Churches. It may be that the time has not yet come when we can begin to gather the fruits of this appeal. There is needed a period of preparation and of solid work. Meanwhile let us give our earnest prayers and consecrated efforts to the accomplishment

* "Report of the Lambeth Conference", 1930.

of gathering all who profess and call themselves Christians into the organic unity of One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

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